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PORTUGAL MAOISTS FIGHTING VOTE BAN

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LISBON, March 22—Portugal's best known Maoist, whose party has been forbidden to participate in elections scheduled for next month, has vowed to fight against the ban by “mobilizing the masses.”

Jose Saldanha Sanches, a 31-year - old revolutionary who wears glasses and has a crew cut, is the leader of the Movement for the Reorganization of the Portuguese Proletariat, one of several far-left groups that came into legal existence with the military coup of last April against the rightist Government of Premier Marcello Caetano.

The movement is generally recognized as one of sharpest thorns in the side of the Communist party and of the armed forces

Mr. Sanches said In an interview that his group was the main target of the decision to bar three groups from the elections April 25 and to suspend their political activity until then.

The decision also affected the Christian Democratic party, a center-right group, and another far-left organization called the Alliance of Workers and Peasants.

Takes to the Streets

The Sanches group has been the only one to take to the streets to protest. With red flags decorated with gold hammer and sickle, young militants gathered in the main square of Lisbon, the Rossio, then marched to Sao Bento Palace, the seat of government.

By the time they reached São Bento they numbered close to 10,000 and the armed forces, which made no effort to break up what was theoretically an illegal demonstration, did surround the palace with troops and armored cars. The

demonstration ended peacefully after speakers had made an appeal to the soldiers as “sons of the people.”

“We are not going to accept the decision without a fight,” Mr. Sanches said. “We know it is unpopular and we are going to mobilize the masses against it.”

He did not go into detail of future action but he said that the revolution was fast approaching “the violent phase.”

The Maoists believe in mass violence, he said, rather than in terrorist acts by small groups.”

The group has concentrated its appeals and organizing efforts on the lowest ranks of the armed forces. Soldiers and sailors have been prominent in demonstrations and the Maoist electoral lists contained the names of 20 soldiers.

“Our main strength is in the armed forces,” Mr. Sanches said, adding that the aim was the formation of “a people's army.” The group has also begun to do some organizing work in the factories, but Mr. Sanches acknowledged that the Communists had a headstart there.

Ideological Replay

The Communists refer to the far-left groups as pseudo-revolutionaries who play the reactionary game by fomenting disorder. The Maoists call the Communists social fascists and revisionists in a replay of the ideological fight between Moscow and Peking.

Mr. Sanches referred to the High Council of the Revolution, the ruling group, as “the high council of the counter-revolution” on the ground that most decisions are adopted under the influence of the Communists.

The 24 - member military council was formed last week after the military rulers announced that they had crushed a right-wing attempt to foment a military uprising.

“The Communists now have strong positions in the armed forces movement,” Mr. Sanches said. He saw the rightist coup and the Communist countercoup as evidence of a struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union for control in Portugal.

Mr. Sanches joined the Communist party at the age of 16 and spent close to 10 years in jail under the former government. He left the party in 1968 because, he said, he was more drawn to the Chinese ideology.

After the revolution last April he was arrested when he published an editorial in his weekly, *Luta Popular*, calling on soldiers to resist being sent to the African colonies. He spent four months in prison.

Last fall he was involved in an attack on a meeting of the main rightist group, the Social Democratic Center, which he accused of links with the fascist past.

He acknowledged that direct confrontation with the Communist was out of the question.

“They are social fascists, but this is not yet the opinion of the large masses whom we have to educate,” he said.

Mr. Sanches, who said he Was both Maoist and Stalinist, was told that Alvaro Cunhal, the Communist leader, was also described by some of his adversaries as Stalinist.

“That is an affront to Stalin,” Mr. Sanches said.